



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 2, 2013

Contact: Lorenza Muñoz, 213-458-6279

Email: lmunoz@bos.lacounty.gov

or

Contact: Lisa Richardson 213-361-6980

Email: lrichardson@bos.lacounty.gov

**CANDLELIGHT VIGIL TO REFLECT ON THE SEASON FOR NONVIOLENCE AND
COMMEMORATION OF THE REV. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.'S DEATH**

Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chairman Mark Ridley-Thomas will host a candlelight vigil April 4 at 6:30 p.m. at the Baldwin Hills Scenic Overlook in commemoration of the death of the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. and in remembrance of those whose lives have been harmed by violence.

The vigil will be attended by Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca, Los Angeles Police Chief Charlie Beck, the Civil Rights leader Rev. James M. Lawson, Rev. Cecil L. Murray, Karen Earl of the Jenesse Center for domestic violence intervention and others including youth who have been affected by violence.

The "Season for Nonviolence," which was established by the grandson of Mohandas K. Gandhi, Arun Gandhi, is a yearly event celebrating the philosophies and the two legendary practitioners of nonviolence: Gandhi and King.

Several speakers will be reflecting on the ideals of nonviolence as well as sharing stories of hope and perseverance. At the conclusion of the vigil, candles will be lit and a moment of silence will be observed in memory of those who have been affected by violence.

In recent months, particularly after the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut, Americans have become increasingly aware of the havoc wreaked on our society by violence—especially gun violence. According to statistics, Americans are seven times more likely to die of homicides and 20 times more likely to die from shootings than their peers in comparable countries. On average, 32 people are murdered every day in the United States. About 100,000 Americans are shot or killed with a gun every year and 20,000 of those Americans are children and teens.

The "Season" began with the anniversary of Gandhi's assassination on January 30, and it ends Thursday, on the anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s assassination. Although the Season is only in its 15th year, it has been growing as a meaningful observance of the teachings of these great men. It is anchored by a mission, statement of principles and commitments by participants towards living in a nonviolent way.

“We must try to live our lives in a nonviolent way, following the path of Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.,” said Chairman Ridley-Thomas. “This event is meant to begin a conversation on ending violence in our society and to help those who have been affected by violence find meaning in their loss.”

#####